



**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Monday, May 3, 2021**

The Public Safety Commission convened a videoconferencing meeting Monday May 3, 2021 at City Hall 301 W. 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Rebecca Gonzales called the Board Meeting to order at 3:09p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Rebecca Gonzales	Michael Sierra-Arevalo
Rebecca Webber	Rocky Lane
Kathleen Hausenfluck	Amanda Lewis
Nelly Ramirez	John Kiracofe
Rebecca Bernhardt	Queen Enyioha

Board Members Absent: none

Staff in Attendance:

Troy Gay, Chief of Staff, Austin Police Department
Jasper Brown, Chief of Staff, Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services
Rob Vires, Chief of Staff, Austin Fire Department

Public Communications - Citizens signed up to speak: None

Chair Gonzales welcomed three new members to the Public Safety Commission and asked that they introduce themselves. The new members are Amanda Lewis for District 4, Queen Enyioha for District 1 and John Kiracofe for District 6.

- 1. Approval of Minutes** – Chair Gonzales asked for any edits/comments to the minutes for April 5, 2021, presented. Hearing no comments/edits the minutes were deemed approved.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. Public Safety Organizations Quarterly Report – Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services (sponsors: Commissioner Hausenfluck and Gonzales)

-Jasper Brown, Chief of Staff, Austin Travis County Emergency Medical Services

Chief Brown presented the quarterly stats for EMS to the board on

- Staffing (currently at 139 vacancies)
- EMS Cadet Classes – July 19, 2021 next scheduled class begins
- COVID-19 Update – EMS department 86% vaccinated

Chair Gonzales asked for questions or discussions at the end of the presentation.

3. Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Gonzales decided to take this item up prior to Re-imagining Public Safety Presentation

Public Safety Commissioners discussed the different topics they would like to have for future briefings and possible action items.

- City and community response to Winter Storm 2021 and data from City of Austin Auditor’s Office (**Commissioner Ramirez and Commissioner Gonzales**)
- Update on Implementation of Prop B (**Commissioner Bernhardt and Commissioner Kiracofe**)
- Update on hiring Police Chief (**Commissioner Ramirez**)
- Requested a firm release date of Auditor’s Report on Winter Storm (**Commissioner Lane**)
- Update on Austin Police Academy training academy (**Commissioner Kiracofe**)
- Update on search for EMS Chief (Commissioner Webber)

b. Re-Imagining Public Safety Presentations (sponsors: Commissioner Webber and Gonzales)

Speakers:

- Reimagining Public Safety Task Force Members
- Amanda Lewis, Public Safety Commissioner

Commissioner Webber introduced Farah Muscadin, Director, Office of Police Oversight. Farah share a brief introduction on the Re-imagine Public Safety task force and its current status and future goals. Farah commented there are eight working groups within the task force to work on different topics to prepare recommendations to present to council. Currently there are four working groups working on recommendations to present to council first, and work will begin on the second four working groups. Per Farah, the working groups are staffed with volunteers and City of Austin staff and the Equity Office is included on all of the working groups efforts.

Commissioner Amanda Lewis is a member of Re-imagining Public Safety and worked with the Services for Survivor of Violence and Violence Prevention Workgroup. Amanda presented on the recommendations of the Survivors of Violence work group to council. The topics listed below were presented with details on the work that has been done and what the group is recommending to council in the near future. explained in detail to the commission

The Guiding Working Group Values

- Survivor Services & Violence Prevention- community based services that do not require survivors to have contact with the criminal legal system
- Community Rooted Safety Grant Program
- Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) Model
- Sex Worker Outreach Services
- Community Based Economic Services
- Community Based Upstream Prevention & Housing
- Internal City of Austin Survivor Healing
- Internal City of Austin Independent Police Oversight, Mandated Reporting
- Office of Violence Prevention
- Public Health Functions for Violence Prevention
- Office of Violence Prevention Funding Recommendations
- Victim Services Recommendations

Commissioner Webber commented the work that has been complete by the workgroup was impressive and appreciated.

Commissioner Ramirez –requested Amanda share on the current services APD Services provide to the community and what the Re-imagining Public Safety (RPS) recommendations are so the board can sort of see/get the contrast between the current and future.

Commissioner Gonzales invited Jessica Johnson to begin her presentation on 911 Working Group and Non Police Crisis Response Working Group, and Patrol and Investigations Working Group. She mentioned they were working on 10 recommendation for the 911 Working Group and 6 recommendations for Patrol and Investigations.

911- Calls for help in communities across the city and has become fearful

Over two decades 28 people of color have been killed or injured by the police so for some communities a call for emergency help can be a dangerous risk.

There are four pieces to the 10 recommendation

-non police crisis line

-diverting 911 calls away from police toward appropriate first responders; mainly mental health

-public education about emergency response options

The most urgent one of the recommendation is the one for Mental Health and the need to achieve true mental health responses. The working group is working on ways the working group was viewing achieving a separate Mental Health Unit.

Another recommendation is a community run no-police first response outside of 911 and this would free up the police to respond to actual crime calls.

Language barriers need to be addressed more extensively

Continue to have input from folks who have been directly harmed by the current system

Make sure there is a budgeted role for the Equity Office in assessing plans for implementation of non-police crisis response

The Patrol and Criminal Investigations is the second working group Jessica Johnson is a member of and she gave a detailed presentation on the numerous recommendations from the group. There was discussion on the recommendations and the current status. **Chair Gonzales** suggested having a monthly agenda item to hear current status from the Re-Imagining Public Safety recommendations from the various working groups in an effort to keep the PSC abreast of all the upcoming communication to council and ways the Public Safety Commission can weigh in with support. **Commissioner Ramirez** was asked to assist the Chair in remembering to bring this group back monthly.

Motioned by Commissioner Gonzales to adjourn

Yes = 8 (Commissioners Gonzales, Ramirez, Webber, Hausenfluck, Enyioha, Lewis, Lane, Sierra-Arevalo, and Bernhardt)

No – 0

Abstain: Commissioners Kiracofe and Lane

Adjourned @ 5pm